

Talking Points
Port of Gulfport/Chiquita announcement
Friday, October 24, 2008
Gulfport

(NOTE: The Port Commission will have voted earlier Friday morning to approve the master development plan.)

- We are here today to celebrate the kind of outstanding trade partnership that works best ... and that's the kind where all parties profit.
- Today in Mississippi the sights and sounds of commerce and progress are undeniable, even in a tough national economy.
- Anyone who drives on our highways already knows Chiquita has a strong presence in our state because you see the 18-wheelers making their way to many distribution points.
- Those trucks are either loaded with or on their way to load up with the fresh fruits delivered to consumers in

North America from right here through the Port of Gulfport.

- Chiquita ... Port of Gulfport ... Mississippi – those words really have a nice ring, don't they.
- But let's get beyond the more than \$100 million dollars in business Chiquita conducts every year with Mississippi-based transportation companies.
- Let's get beyond the details of the lease agreement between the Port of Gulfport and Chiquita that extend the company's lease through 2019.
- Let's even move beyond the fact that Chiquita will be the first corporate tenant under the Port's new master plan, which was formally approved earlier this morning by the Commissioners.

- Let's move to the bright, promising future Mississippi and Chiquita share.
- Chiquita is a global company with a best-in-class product supply and logistics capability. This agreement helps Chiquita achieve its vision to be the global leader in branded healthy, fresh food.
- That fits with Mississippi's economic development goals, too ... to attract, retain and help world-class companies grow in a strong, pro-business climate.
- And provide good-paying jobs for Mississippians in the process.
- In post-Katrina Mississippi, we are renewing our pledge to build back bigger and better.

- That future will be stronger with a Port designed to withstand the destructive storm surges and high winds that devastated our Gulf Coast three years ago.
- Chiquita has been an excellent partner as the Gulf Coast heals from the worst natural disaster in U.S. history and, in fact, was back in business here just 30 days after Katrina, even though its facilities were wiped out by the storm.
- That's the kind of can-do spirit, resilience, and performance that Chiquita has in common with the people of Mississippi.
- That's what makes a winning combination where all parties profit.
- On behalf of all Mississippians, I want to say how appreciative I am to the Port and its leadership, to Mississippi workers, to our Congressional delegation,

to local officials, and to Chiquita for working diligently
to rebuild this vital piece of our Gulf Coast's future.